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Senate Bill 66 (Substitute S-2 as reported)
Sponsor: Senator John Proos
Committee: Education

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Revised School Code to do the following with respect to Michigan Merit curriculum requirements for a high school diploma:

- Allow certain credits under the Michigan Merit curriculum, or a personal curriculum, to be fulfilled by the completion of a career and technical education program.
- Require a request for a personal curriculum to be granted if the request were made by a pupil's parent or legal guardian or by a pupil who was at least 18 or emancipated.
- Require school districts and public school academies to give parents and pupils an annual notice about entitlement to a personal curriculum.

The Code requires one credit of algebra II but allows a pupil to fulfill it in several ways, including completion of a formal career and technical education (CTE) program or curriculum approved by the Department of Education. Under the bill, in that program or curriculum, the pupil would have to successfully complete the same content as the algebra II benchmarks assessed on the Department-prescribed State high school assessment.

The bill would allow a pupil to fulfill the requirement for one credit in visual arts, performing arts, or applied arts by successfully completing a CTE course that covered the same content standards as covered in one credit in those arts, as determined by the Department.

The Code allows the parent or legal guardian of a pupil, a teacher, or a school counselor to request a personal curriculum for a pupil that modifies some of the Michigan Merit requirements. The bill would require the school district or public school academy to develop a personal curriculum if the request were made by the pupil's parent or legal guardian, or by the pupil if he or she were at least 18 years old or an emancipated minor.

The bill would prohibit the Department, a school district, or a PSA from limiting the number of pupils with a personal curriculum, or discouraging a pupil from requesting one, on any basis other than the best interests of each individual pupil.

Currently, a personal curriculum may modify the algebra II requirement if the pupil meets certain requirements, which include enrolling in a formal CTE program or curriculum and in that program or curriculum successfully completing the same content as one semester of algebra II. The bill would refer, instead, to the same content as the algebra II benchmarks assessed on the Department-prescribed State high school assessment.

Currently, a personal curriculum may modify one of the three social science credit requirements, if the pupil completes one additional credit in English language arts, math, or science, or one additional credit in a language other than English. Under the bill, the pupil would have to complete either that credit or a formal CTE program.

A personal curriculum also may modify the requirements for one health and physical education credit, and one visual arts, performing arts, or applied arts credit, if the pupil

completes one additional credit in English language arts, math, or science, or one additional credit in a language other than English. Under the bill, the pupil would have to complete either that credit or a CTE program. The CTE program would have to be 1) Department-approved; and 2) established and offered by the school board or PSA board of directors as a formal partnership with a local business entity, trade organization, nonprofit organization, State-licensed proprietary school, university, or community college.

The bill would require a school district or PSA annually to give pupils and parents notice that all pupils are entitled to a personal curriculum. The notice would have to explain what a personal curriculum is, and state that if a personal curriculum were requested by a parent or legal guardian, or by a pupil who was at least 18 or emancipated, and if it complied with applicable requirements, the school would have to grant the request.

If a school district, intermediate school district, or public school academy requested information from the Department on CTE programs that could help fulfill merit curriculum requirements, the Department would have to provide that information within a reasonable time. The Department also would have to post on its website information concerning best practices in CTE, including information detailed in the bill.

The Code requires a school board or PSA board of directors to provide the opportunity for each pupil to develop an educational development plan during grade 7, and includes additional procedures regarding the plan's development. The bill would require a school board or PSA board of directors, as part of the development process, to ensure that pupils were given information about fulfilling merit curriculum requirements with CTE.

The bill states that school districts, intermediate school districts, and public school academies would be "strongly encouraged" to establish programs whose completion, after high school graduation, would be credited toward achievement of a professional certificate, training, apprenticeship, or college credit in a specific career and technical field.

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Legislative Analyst: Glenn Steffens

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill likely would increase costs to the State Department of Education by requiring the Department to compile and make available CTE best practices information as specified in the bill, including information on successful career and technical education programs, CTE programs provided around the State and disciplines covered by the programs, illustrations of partnerships between educational entities and businesses, and how course content required under the Michigan Merit standard had been embedded into CTE.

The bill would have an indeterminate fiscal impact on local schools. Expanding the scope of a personal curriculum to substitute CTE in more areas could result in more students seeking personal curricula and CTE offerings, which may or may not be more costly than "traditional" courses. Also, the requirement that schools annually inform students of their entitlement to a personal curriculum likely would increase both communication costs as well as staff time costs (to assess the need for and/or develop the curriculum) commensurate with the level of new interest generated by students seeking a personal curriculum.

Date Completed: 12-12-13

Fiscal Analyst: Kathryn Summers

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.